

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8072

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY BONN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR,PINT, FR, GW, UR, US, UK

SUBJ: SOVIET TRAVEL CONTROLS

1. WHILE EMBASSY IS NOT YET IN POSITION TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF NEW TRAVEL REGULATIONS, DEPARTMENT MAY FIND IT USEFUL TO HAVE OUR PRELIMINARY COMMENTS.

2. EXPERIENCE OF UK, FRENCH, WEST GERMAN, AND U.S. EMBOFFS IN FIRST TWO WEEKENDS OF TRAVEL "RELAXATION" WHICH TOOK EFFECT APRIL 5 INDICATES THAT TRAVELERS BORE THE BRUNT OF EDUCATING LOCAL AUTHORITIES REGARDING MFA NOTE OF FEBRUARY 18. IN THE FIRST DAYS SOME ARBITRARY REFUSALS WERE MET, AND MILITARY PRESENCE AT LAKE SENEZHSKOYE APPARENTLY COMPLICATED THEORETICAL RIGHT TO DRIVE AROUND THE LAKE. ONCE LOCAL POLICE GRASPED NEW SITUATION, HOWEVER, MOST IMPEDIMENTS WERE REMOVED.

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3. TWO UK DIPLOMATS AND FAMILIES WERE TURNED BACK BY ARMED MILITARY PATROL AT LAKE SENEZHSKOYE ON APRIL 6. ON THE NEXT DAY TWO FRENCH DIPLOMATS WERE TOLD TO MOVE ON SINCE THEY WERE ON "PROHIBITED LAND." PHOTOCOPIES OF FEBRUARY 18 MFA NOTE WERE REJECTED AS INVALID EVEN AFTER PROTRACTED TELEPHONE DISCUSSION BETWEEN LOCAL MVD OFFICER AND HEADQUARTERS. HOWEVER, BY EASTER SUNDAY, U.S. AND FRG DIPLOMATS MET NO PROBLEMS AT LAKE SENEZHSKOYE.

4. UK TRAVELERS WERE STOPPED EN ROUTE TO ZVENIGOROD, ISTRA, DUBNA, AND SOLNECHNEGORSK FIRST WEEKEND BUT WERE PERMITTED TO PROCEED AFTER 15- MINUTE CALLS BY THE MILITIA OFFICER. U.S. EMBOFF HAD NO DIFFICULTY ON THE DUBNA ROAD APRIL 7.

5. U.S. DIPLOMATS ENCOUNTERED NO PROBLEMS BUT HAVE NOT THUS FAR PROBED AS ACTIVELY AS OTHERS CITED ABOVE. WE PLAN IN COMING WEEKENDS TO TEST EACH OF THE OPEN AREAS NOT YET VISITED.

6. FRG AUTHORITIES ARE TACKLING THE JOB OF UNIFYING VARIOUS EXISTING TRAVEL REGULATIONS FOR SOVIET DIPLOMATS, JOURNALISTS, KILN TRADE COMMISSION STAFF, MILITARY MISSION, AND MILITARY ATTACHES IN THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC. PROBLEM IS TO RECONCILE RECIPROCITY WITH EXISTING REGULATIONS, AND DEFINITION OF CLOSED AREAS IS NOW UNDER EXAMINATION.

7. FRG, FRANCE, AND UK HAVE NOT YET REPLIED TO SOVIETS ABOUT RECIPROCAL RELAXATIONS, BUT SOVIETS HAVE NOT PRESSED FOR REPLIES. UK DECISION NOT EXPECTED BEFORE TWO MONTHS AT LEAST, AND ONLY MINOR CONCESSIONS ARE NOW CONTEMPLATED. FRENCH FEEL THEY CANNOT RECIPROCATATE AS TIGHTLY AS U.S. BUT FEEL UNDER NO PRESSURE TO REPLY IMMEDIATELY.
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